



For Some Reason He Felt Anxiety . . .

CHAPTER 2

By DAVID WISE AND THOMAS ROSS

Now alone in his plane over the Soviet Socialist Republic of Tadzikistan, Powers was nervously throwing the mission switches at the designated points on his map.

Below, the earth was covered by thick clouds, as if all life had been blotted out. Yet he knew the Soviet Air Defense Command would be alive with activity. The United States had been flying into Soviet air space with impunity since the end of World War II. Stripped-down B-36 bombers started making short penetrations after the war, and by 1950 the RB-47, a reconnaissance version of the bomber, was conducting scheduled intrusions. In one 24-hour period 17 of them had been over the Soviet Union.

The Russians made sporadic protests, but more often they maintained an indignant silence because they could do nothing about it. The U-2 brought back photographs of Soviet fighters rising to the attack only to mush but hopelessly before they reached the exalted altitude of the "black lady of espionage" — as it was called in their military journals.

work of powerful radar stations along the perimeter of the Iron Curtain.

Powers was preoccupied by the precise skills of his trade. He was a first-rate pilot, a superb navigator, and an exceptional photographer. He had always followed his instructions to the letter and he was doing so that day. But he was under an inexplicable anxiety that he had not felt on his previous

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